

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505

24 September 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Recipients of Directorate of Intelligence  
and National Intelligence Council  
Publications

SUBJECT : Leaks and the Dissemination of Intelligence

1. In recent years, the National Intelligence Council, which is responsible for the production of all National Intelligence assessments, and CIA's Directorate of Intelligence have moved aggressively to understand better the priority issues and problems facing US policymakers and to increase the production and dissemination of finished intelligence responsive to those requirements. We have tried to accommodate the growing number and diversity of users of intelligence and, at the same time, have tried to be more forthright about our level of confidence in our judgments and the reliability of our information, all with a view to making assessments more useful.

2. It is most unfortunate that these efforts have taken place during a period when the years-long decline of discipline and security consciousness in the government has accelerated and leaks of sensitive intelligence information and assessments have become nearly uncontrollable. Tragically, we have now reached the point where the costs and risks to intelligence sources and methods--and thence to our national security interests--now outweigh the benefits of broader dissemination of intelligence products.

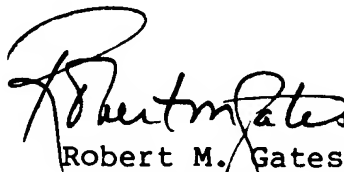
3. Obviously, no single measure can end the stream of unauthorized disclosures. Nonetheless, it is our responsibility to do what we can to limit the damage. With the approval of the Director of Central Intelligence, effective today I am directing the following actions:

- Henceforth all National Intelligence Estimates and CIA assessments will be disseminated on a strict "need-to-know" or "must-know" basis. As a rule, dissemination to the policy community of estimates and assessments involving sensitive compartmented information or

sensitive human sources will be limited to 25 copies. Any dissemination of such estimates and assessments beyond 25 copies will require my approval.

- As before, reproduction of these documents is prohibited. We will soon begin using specially marked paper that will enable us to identify the original addressee of any reproduced copies of such sensitive documents. Moreover, the addressee is responsible for maintaining a record of others who are given access to these sensitive documents.
- Current intelligence on subjects of special sensitivity and importance to our national security, such as Soviet weapons developments, will be covered less frequently in the National Intelligence Daily. Those with a need-to-know on such matters will receive timely information and assessments from CIA in the form of restricted dissemination brief memoranda. Copies of these memoranda also will be provided to both the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

4. The choice we face is between severely restricting dissemination or so diluting and generalizing our assessments as to seriously impair their value. These restrictions are undertaken with the greatest reluctance. We hope that when discipline is restored, we can again expand our dissemination. In the meantime, we hope that these and other related measures will diminish the number and damage of leaks and make possible more successful investigations of leaks.



Robert M. Gates  
Chairman  
National Intelligence Council  
and  
Deputy Director for Intelligence  
Central Intelligence Agency